Secrets of Successful Entrepreneurs

By Sheila Kelly, MS, RD

Author of *The Nutrition Entrepreneur: How to Start and Grow a Great Business* (Second Edition)

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[www.skellyskills.com](http://www.skellyskills.com)
Learning Objectives

At the conclusion of this seminar, participants will be able to:

- State two reasons why social media and technology skills are essential for nutrition entrepreneurs
- State three qualities research shows successful entrepreneurs have
- Complete a self-assessment of qualities and skills
- Analyze one piece of advice from an RD entrepreneur to a new or existing entrepreneurial venture

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About Me (more or less in order)

- WIC Nutritionist
- RD—clinical
- RD, CDE—outpatient
- Clinical Nutrition Manager
- Private practice on the side
- Consultant for dotcom startups
- Full-time dotcommer: eFit.com, WeightWatchers.com
- Entrepreneur/CEO: Skelly Skills: CE and training for RDs, CDEs and other health professionals

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Part I:
Entrepreneurship 2.0 for Dietitians

“Dietitians need to join in the conversation if they want to be heard.” Jenny Westerkamp, RD, CEO, All Access Internships, & Social Media Marketing Consultant
Nutrition Entrepreneurship Isn’t Just the Local Anymore

- RD entrepreneurs must understand the online and social media environment to be successful
- Amplify your voice
- Shrink your time/effort—what’s the cost of your time?
Why Must Entrepreneurial Dietitians Understand Technology and Communications?

- Everybody else is doing it—NO barriers to entry (so walk on through!)

“We need more dietitians in the media (and social media) to take the nutrition conversation away from the vocal minority who are not qualified to dominate the conversation. Get communications training and/or mentoring to boost your skills and confidence - what you don’t know CAN hurt you.” Melissa Joy Dobbins, Owner, Sound Bites, Inc.: media and communication skills to help dietitians gain more visibility, influence and success. [www.soundbitesnutrition.com](http://www.soundbitesnutrition.com)

“I write my blog because it drives me crazy when the media misleads the public on a recent study. People look to me to set them straight and they appreciate when I blog about them.” Peggy Korody, MS, RD. Author: Little Hands in the Kitchen. [http://rd4health.com/little-hands-in-the-kitchen/](http://rd4health.com/little-hands-in-the-kitchen/)


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Why Should Entrepreneurial Dietitians Understand Technology and Communications?

- The world is changing.

“In today’s market, credentials are not as powerful as they once were. In order for a business to be successful, communications are key. Utilize all aspects of social media to get your message out. Our non-credentialed competition is capturing the market based on social media skills rather than expertise.” Faye Berger-Mitchell, author: Making Nutrition Your Business: Private Practice and Beyond; Be Your Own Boss Starter Kit and The RD Reimbursement Guide. www.nutritionpracticeadvisors.com


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What are Dietitian Entrepreneurs Doing in Technology and Communications?

- Writing books
- Writing blogs
- Doing media training and communications consulting
- Creating apps
- Providing continuing education
- Creating online tools for practitioners and clients
- Providing social media marketing expertise
- Customizing EMR for nutrition experts in practice
- Offering corporate wellness programs
- And much more…

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Part II:
Your Personality: Do you have the Entrepreneur Persona?

"...very few people achieve success in ventures that aren't good fits with their innate personalities." Bill Wagner, *The Entrepreneur Next Door*. P.71

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True or False?
There’s one ‘type’ of successful entrepreneur personality.
If you could choose between working hard and working smart, you would:

a. Work hard
b. Work smart
c. Both
What is your primary motivation in starting a business?

a. To make money
b. I don't like working for someone else
c. To be famous
d. To have an outlet for excess energy
Theme 1: The Competitive and Intrepid Spirit

- Competition often key to improving products and services
- Many simply improved upon existing business models—they did things better
- Vince Lombardi said it best!

*Adapted from “Do You Fit the Mold For Startup Success?” (Mancuso, 2005)*
Theme 1: The Competitive and Intrepid Spirit

The Takeaway:

- Personality characteristic but one that can be honed
- Find ways to keep yourself motivated and inspired

“Coca-cola never stops advertising. RDs need to follow that path as well. My book sells because I try to never stop promoting it. It’s a lot of work!” Nancy Clark, MS, RD, Author: Nancy Clark’s Sports Nutrition Guidebook (5th Edition).”
www.nancyclarkrd.com

“Working by yourself can get lonely. If you can, find and work with a reliable partner that has just as much passion as you do. Ideally you have complementary skill sets, but equally high passion.” Jason Machowsky, MS, RD, author, Death of the Diet. www.deathofthediet.com (includes blog).

“Follow your passion and keep changing until what you are doing "feels right." Then, create your niche and your own special "brand." Make sure you get your "brand" out there in the early days of your career any way you can.” Janet Bond Brill, PhD, RD, author, Cholesterol Down: 10 simple steps to lower your cholesterol in 4 weeks; Prevent a Second Heart Attack: 8 Foods, 8 Weeks to Reverse Heart Disease and Blood Pressure Down: the 10-step program to lower your blood pressure in 4 weeks. Named Nutrition Entrepreneur of the Year, 2012!

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Quiz Question #3

Given a choice, you would prefer:

a. Rolling dice with a one-in-three chance of winning.
b. Working on a problem with a one-in-three chance of solving it in the allotted time.
Theme 2: The Eternal Optimist

- Believe with the right amount of time or money can accomplish anything
- Redefine ‘right place at the right time’
- The Midwestern shoe salesman—which ‘daughter’ are you?

Adapted from “Do You Fit the Mold For Startup Success?” (Mancuso, 2005)
Theme 2: The Eternal Optimist

The Takeaway: Do you naturally see opportunities or obstacles?

"I am not afraid of 'no'...it takes at least 10 'no's’ to get the 'yes’. If you can’t take those odds, being an entrepreneur is not for you.” Denice Ferko-Adams, Owner, Wellness Solutions, Corporate Wellness company: http://www.wellnesspress.com/

“My path to entrepreneurship was borne of the need to find a different way to hold the food conversation with consumers...A conversation that could help Americans make food choices that would be meaningful to themselves, their communities and their country (sustainability to the core).” Amanda Archibald, RD, Owner: Field to Plate. www.fieldtoplate.com.
If you were an advanced tennis player and had a chance to play a tennis legend like Andre Agassi, you would:

a. Turn it down because he could beat you
b. Accept the challenge, but not bet any money on it
c. Bet a week's pay that you would win
d. Get odds, bet a fortune, and try for an upset
Theme 3: Don’t Bet the Ranch

- Typical entrepreneur not how the media portrays him or her
- Tend to set realistic, achievable goals
- Risks taken are calculated ones that depend more on personal skills than on chance

Adapted from “Do You Fit the Mold For Startup Success?” (Mancuso, 2005)
Theme 3: Don’t Bet the Ranch

- The Takeaway: Do a personal inventory

- "Without a doubt, knowing your strengths and areas for growth is essential to be successful and satisfied in your chosen career. Unfortunately, too many of us fall into our career path." Jean Caton, MBA, RD, Career Coach and Speaker

- "When choosing your business or product idea, leverage your communications strengths: what comes easily to you is not easy for everyone." Jessica Setnick, RD
  - Eating Disorders Boot Camp ... www.EatingDisordersBootCamp.com
    Training for dietitians about eating disorders
  - Eating DisorderJobs.com ... www.EatingDisorderJobs.com learn about and search for jobs in the eating disorders field
Ready to Become an Entrepreneur?

- Just one more question...
Quiz Question #5

The only ingredient that is both necessary and sufficient for starting a business is:

a. Money
b. Customers
c. An idea or product
d. Motivation and hard work

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Theme 4: Know Your Customer!

“*All businesses begin with orders, and orders can only come from customers. You might think you're in business when you've developed a prototype or after you've raised capital, but bankers and venture capitalists only buy potential. It takes customers to buy products.*”

*Adapted from “Do You Fit the Mold For Startup Success?” (Mancuso, 2005)*
Keep Your Customer First!

- “Always make your products or programs about 'them', not you!” Ashvini Mashru, MA, RD, LDN, Speaker/Blogger: weight loss the non dieting way and making lifestyle changes for busy moms: www.wellnessnutritionconcepts.com/

- “Become familiar with your subject matter and, more importantly, your audience, and then write something that you know about that speaks to your audience. Promote it more than you think that you need to in creative ways through connections and social media.” Jill Nussinow, RD (aka The Veggie Queen). Author: The New Fast Food: The Veggie Queen Pressure Cooks Whole Food Meals in Less than 30 Minutes. www.theveggiequeen

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FILL THEIR NEEDS!

- “I wrote this book because, when I became a school nutrition educator 20 years ago, I kept looking for a book like this to help me!” Connie Evers, MS, Rd author, How to Teach Nutrition to Kids (3rd Edition)

- “I learned about a new, effective, evidence-based diet for IBS and found there were no teaching tools available in the U.S. I created these products to fill that niche.” Patsy Catsos, RD, author: IBS--Free at Last! (2012), paperback, a book to help people with IBS learn to manage their irritable bowel syndrome with a FODMAP elimination diet. [http://www.ibsfree.net](http://www.ibsfree.net)

- KaiZenRD EMR was showcased as one of the 2013 "Hottest Health IT Technologies for Improving Healthcare Delivery and Patient Outcomes" by the Venture+Forum of the mHealth Summit in Washington DC. We created it to help RDs in private practice manage their billing and recordkeeping.” Karen Patalano, RD, co-owner


- Skelly Skills born from this same experience

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FILL THEIR NEEDS!

- Almost 90% of RDs surveyed indicated they focused on communications entrepreneurship *because they saw a need within their area of expertise and filled it!*
- What are your customers asking for?
- What wish lists do you have as a practitioner?
Part III: Getting and Staying Inspired: Profiles of Successful Entrepreneurs

“There is never a right time and there is no such thing as being an entrepreneur and being risk free. You will make money and you will lose money.” Amanda Archibald, RD, Owner, Field to Plate
How They Were Chosen

- In business for at least ten years
- Represent a cross-section of nutrition-related businesses
- Each has exploited singular ‘secret weapon’/key element of successful entrepreneurship
Profile #1: Rebecca Bitzer

- Business: Rebecca Bitzer and Associates
- Duration: 15 years
- Secret Weapon/Signature Style: Constant Reinvention
- “I have always been creative and have an intense desire to make things better...I have definitely found my courage by consistently pushing myself out of my comfort zone.”
Profile #2: Amanda Archibald

- Business: Field to Plate
- Duration: 10 years
- Secret Weapon/Signature Style: Visionary Service Provider
- “My path to entrepreneurship was borne of the need to find a different way to hold the food conversation with consumers...A conversation that could help Americans make food choices that would be meaningful to themselves, their communities and their country (sustainability to the core).”
Profile #3: Lauren Swann

- **Business:** Food and Restaurant Industry Consultation
- **Duration:** 20+ years
- **Secret Weapon/Signature Style:** Leverage Industry Knowledge/Exploit Regulatory Changes. Excellence in market timing!
- “I started my consulting business when the Nutrition Labeling & Education Act of 1990 required food companies, including those who had no internal dedicated staff, to add nutrition to their product labels.”
Profile #4: Denice Ferko-Adams

- Business: Corporate Wellness
- Duration: 20+ years
- Secret Weapon/Signature Style: Market creator & pioneer
- "I am not afraid of ‘no’...it takes at least 10 ‘no’s’ to get the ‘yes’. If you can’t take those odds, being an entrepreneur is not for you.”
For Your Continued Learning

- Keep working on your business, or business idea!
  - www.sba.gov
  - www.entrepreneur.com
  - www.inc.com

- For more on learning entrepreneurial skills, and honing your strengths—consider the 25 CPE program *The Nutrition Entrepreneur* from Skelly Skills. For more information, visit www.skellyskills.com.

- Please sign up for our free monthly CE webinars with our authors at www.skellyskills.com!

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